Mr. S. Narayana Aiyar: Owing to the reduction in the number of train services there is some rush for obtaining tickets in our stations. The authorities are issuing only a limited number of tickets from each station.

In regard to corruption in the trains, the Railway authorities have set up separate agencies to check tickets and put down corruption.

The other difficulties pointed out by the honourable members will be placed before the Advisory Board of the South Indian Railway.

The question that Government be granted a sum of Rs. 89,800 under Demand XIV—Railways was put to vote and carried.

The grant was made.

DEMAND XV—STATE TRANSPORT.

Mr. N. Ramamurti: Sir, I beg to move for a grant of Rs. 42,97,529 under Demand XV—State Transport.

Mr. P. Gopalan : സർ, ഈ അഭ്യർത്ഥനയെ ഞാൻ എതിർക്കുന്നുമില്ല സപ്പോർട്ടുചെയ്യുന്നുമില്ല. ഒരു നിർദ്ദേശംമാത്രം നൽകുന്നതിനാണ് ഞാൻ ഉദ്ദേശിക്കുന്നതു്. ഇപ്പോൾ വണ്ടികളുടെ കുറവുകൊണ്ടു് എല്ലാ ട്രാൻസ്പോർട്ടു് ബസ സ്റ്റാൻറുകളിലും വണ്ടികയറാനുള്ള ആളുകളുടെ തിക്കും തിരക്കും ബഹളവും വളരെ കൂടുതലായിട്ടാണ് കാണുന്നതു്. സമയത്തു വണ്ടിയിൽ കയറിപ്പോകാൻ സൗകര്യം കിട്ടുന്നതു് കായികശക്തിയുള്ളവർക്ക് മാത്രമേ ഉള്ളു. അല്പാത്തവർ രാവിലെ വന്നു് വൈകുന്നേരംവരെ ചിലപ്പോൾ കാത്തുനിൽക്കേണ്ടതായി വരുന്നുണ്ടു്. അതിനാൽ ആദ്യംവരുന്നവരെ ആദ്യം അയക്കത്തക്കരീതിയിൽ എല്ലാ ബസ്സ്റ്റാൻറുകളിലും ബസ്സിൽ പോകാൻവരുന്നവർക്കു് ആദ്യം വന്നു എന്നുകാണിക്കുന്നതിനു് ഒരു ടിക്കറെറാ ഒരു കടലാസോ കൊടുത്താലുണ്ടാൽ അവരെ ആദ്യം അയയ്ക്കുവാൻ കഴിയും. സാധാരണയായി വണ്ടിപുറപ്പെടാൻ സമയത്തു് തിക്കിത്തിരക്കി കായശക്തിയുള്ളവർ കയറിപ്പോകുന്നു. മറവുള്ളവർ വളരെ സമയം കാത്തുനിൽക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു. അതിനുള്ളകാരണം അവർക്കുള്ള പ്രാപ്തിക്കുറവാണെന്നുമാത്രമേ പറയാനുള്ളു. അതുകൊണ്ടു് എല്ലാബസ്സ്റ്റാൻറുകളിലും പ്രത്യേകം ഒരു ക്ലാക്കിനെക്കൂടി ഇരുത്തി ആദ്യംവരുന്നവരെ രെജിസ്റ്റർചെയ്യുന്നതിനുവേണ്ടും അവർക്കു എന്തെങ്കിലും ഒരു സയിൻകൊടുക്കുന്ന ഒരേർപ്പാടു് നടപ്പിൽ വരുത്തണമെന്നുള്ള അപേക്ഷയോടുകൂടി ഞാൻ വിരമിക്കുന്നു.

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Mr. T. M. Chidambarathanu Pillai: Sir, I support the demand for the Transport Department. The existence of society depends upon the movement of goods and men. Prior to the introduction of the motor transport, that is just before 1090, we were depending upon *tapal vandis* for our transport. We had certain carts to take us from Trivandrum to Nagercoil. That was abandoned by the introduction of the motor bus system in South Travancore. Subsequently, now the Transport Department has taken up the whole of the communication of the people and the goods. There is no other way for people to go. There is no competition and there is no other method of transport here except the bullock-carts. Every day a large number of people go from Trivandrum to Nagercoil, I should say that it is the heaviest of public roads. But with all its importance I see that there is a lot of confusion and sometimes threatening and even breach of the peace in the bus stations there. There is a so called time-keeper in the Nagercoil bus stand. He wants only to see the time when the buses leave. No amount of imagination will satisfactorily convince anybody about the confusion that prevails at the time a bus leaves the stand. I am speaking from my own experience. First of all, there is no knowing when a bus starts from one place to another. Sir, it is usual in the Railway stations to ring a bell when the train starts. But here no indication is given as to when the bus starts.

Again, we are getting advance tickets in the case of the express bus. After a certain amount of experience we have got that convenience. That is a good thing. But no such system is followed in the case of the ordinary buses. Last Monday, I was coming from Nagercoil to this side. When I came to the bus stand I saw the Conductor. He was a graduate and the Parcel Clerk who showed me a particular car and said that bus was to start to Trivandrum at 5·30 A. M At 5·30 the car came before the bus stand. I moved towards the bus and along with me certain others also came hoping that they would be able to get in along with me. But it happend that some other car started off at 5·30 A. M to Trivandrum and by the time we knew that that was the car going to Trivandrum ; we were late and we did not get tickets. Sir, there must be a ringing of the bell to indicate the movements of the buses. I would suggest that in the case of the ordinary buses just as in the case of the express service, through passengers must be given preference. People who travel long distances should be given tickets first. They might require to go to the offices and they might not be able to get at the desired places because here might is right. People travelling short distances can reach the places even by walking if they are not able to get the bus. I would also

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suggest that even for ordinary passenger tickets there must be an advance issue of tickets. An extra payment of an anna may be made if necessary. Preference must be given to the through passengers and those who apply first.

President: Does not that happen now, Mr. Ramamurthi ?

Mr. N. Ramamurthi: In the express services through passengers are given preference. In the ordinary transport buses there is no such system.

Mr. T. M. Chidambarathanu Pillai: Sir, what now happens is that a person who wants to go to Trivandrum from Nagercoil is made to wait all through the day, while a passenger who comes from Nagercoil for alighting at Thakalai is given preference. The Department may provide shuttle services when pressure comes for the sake of passengers who wish to go to the intermediate stations. We appreciate the difficulty in the way of getting tyres and cars. At the same time, greater efficiency in the conduct of the service could be maintained by some adjustments.

The issue of tickets after the car has started is most annoying. There are ladies and gentlemen piled one against the other inside the bus. The minimum number of thirty is always forgotten. The conductors should not disturb the passengers in the middle of the journey. When the people are elbowing or pushing each other for some breathing space, then just like a snake the conductor comes winding through the passengers. This is not even courteous.

Another point is with regard to the control. Sir, a certain amount of control is necessary in any business. This is a department which is now completely self-sufficient. It is arrogating to itself against all the passengers. Even police officers are not given sufficient convenience. There is no knowing of the number of people admitted inside the buses. The checking of the department is of no use at all. Why not the police department be given some control in this matter. These conductors, Inspectors etc., can be made the bill collectors and such other officers. But with regard to the checking of the services, that is, whether the buses are overloaded or properly conducted etc., it is better that the Police have a hand in the matter. Sir, there are certain private owners who have got the transport system running between certain place. For instance, the Quilon—Alleppey line is run by private enterprise. About 25 seats are provided in each bus and the people are taken conveniently from place to place. The Police are having control over them.

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[Mr. T. M. Chidambarathanu Pillai]

There is another matter which concerns the internal management of the Department. I was able to know that large amounts of bonus have been given to those people who are responsible for the profit of the Department. The business of serving in the transport system is almost a risky one. Sometimes there may be accidents. The graduate conductors and others may not be well experienced to stand while the buses are running or able to get in or alight without endangering themselves. I have seen cases where some men have been disabled permanently. My suggestion is that out of the bonus or by a special arrangement certain compensation should be allowed to persons who are temporarily or permanently disabled. I know a certain case. Some three months ago, during the Mandakadu ceremony in South Travancore one conductor broke his legs. He was in the hospital for three months and has now come out. He is seen going to the other conductors and time-keepers and getting something from them to meet his daily wants. He broke his legs while on active service. There should be some arrangement by which he is compensated.

President: Is not this man compensated?

Mr. N. Ramamurthi: He was on leave and he did not apply. Now, he has been asked to apply.....

Rajyasevapravina G. Parameswaran Pillai: Even otherwise, under the Workmen's Compensation Act, he is entitled to compensation.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup: Sir, I know that this Department is the pet of the Administrative Head and taking advantage of this fact this child makes many mischiefs and causes great inconvenience to the passengers. In spite of the direction, not to take more than 50% of the licensed number, over-crowding is the rule now. On the 20th of this month I had the misfortune to get into a transport bus wherein 59 standing passengers also were admitted in addition to those sitting. It was impossible for me to turn my head this side or that without touching one or the other of the disagreeable passengers who were standing. Sir, was it not disobeying the direction? Even at the starting stations like Trivandrum and Quilon we are unable to get seats in the bus without fighting. Passengers who come early and wait from morning to evening and those who arrive at the time of departure of the bus are all fighting to squeeze their way through the small wicket-gate of the bus. Sir, this arrangement often causes great injury to the passengers. I saw a certain passenger getting an injury on his right hand. Another lost his watch-chain during the fight and I saw another man crying for admission to the bus to accompany

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his old mother who was given a seat and became disappointed. Even best relations are sometimes parted forcibly during a journey from Trivandrum to Quilon or Quilon to Trivandrum in the bus, due to the inability of either one or the other, not able to secure a seat. Sir, if these conditions were to prevail, I am afraid, we may have to attach a medical van with a Doctor to these buses to give first aid. Such is the situation we have to face when we try to get a seat in one of the ordinary buses of the Transport Department.

Sir, I may suggest that tickets or tokens may be issued sufficiently early when passengers come to the bus stand, whereby those who come early will have an opportunity to get in early. All will be getting seats in their priority of arrival without fighting at the gate. I know that we cannot make everything perfect; yet we can minimise the difficulties and satisfy the travelling public as far as possible.

Coming on to the operating charges, Sir, it is 2½ lakhs of rupees more than that of the previous year, even though the gross receipt has increased only by 1¼ lakhs of rupees. The explanation given in the memorandum is that the price of fuel, tyre and diesel oil has increased.

Sir, I am sure that the price of fuel, diesel oil, tyre and petrol has not increased to such an extent as to incur an additional amount of Rs. 2½ lakhs more than that of the previous year's expenditure.

President : What is the member's opinion on the advance issue of tickets and if it is given effect to from the middle of next month ?

Mr. N. Ramamurthi : In the case of "advance issue" as mentioned by the Director of Transport in the other House, there is the question of black marketing of tickets, which has to be considered very seriously. Anyway, we are going to experiment that system in Trivandrum and Kottayam and necessary arrangements will be made to prevent the possibility of any black marketing of the tickets issued earlier. I trust that the honourable members will be able to appreciate the introduction of that system both in Trivandrum and Kottayam and if it proves successful, the desirability of introducing it in other centres will be explored.

Mr. M. Mohamed Mustafa : May I know, will the troubles subside then ?

Mr. N. Ramamurthi : Yes, Sir, to some extent. But the possibility of getting down extra buses still remain the burning question for which appropriate measures are being taken.

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Mr. N. Narayana Kurup: Sir, as regards the operating expenses, I was submitting that Rs. 2½ lakhs is alleged to be expended this year which is considerably more than the amount in previous years and the reasons alleged are that the prices of fuel, diesel oil, petrol and tyre have increased considerably. I doubt whether the prices of those articles have increased to such an extent as to incur such a big amount as Rs. 2½ lakhs more than the previous year's expenditure. I am afraid that the expenses are too much and it demands curtailment at the hands of the Departmental Head.

Then, Sir, if we count the number of employees in the Department, it will be found that they are 20 times more than the number of buses. That is our information. Ordinary services other than the Government Transport system are being conducted at lesser cost and with lesser number of hands. A study of the working of the private bus services at Alleppey or Kottayam will convince us the truth of my statement. Any way, Sir, it is quite essential that the Government should give strict warning to the Department to curtail expenses and conduct the Service to the benefit of the people.

A word in connection with bus stops fixed in the town of Trivandrum with special reference to long distance trips will not be out of place. In fixing bus stops, convenience of the people is ignored by the Department. Even though we pay higher rates and suffer standing for hours together, holding fast on to the central bar of the van our convenience is ignored by the Department. If I want to get down at the Statue Junction or Pulimood junction which are considered to be the most important and convenient places, in the Trivandrum town, for passengers to alight, I am forced to get down either at Contonment or at the old District Court bus stop. That is the rule now, they say.

Mr. G. Narayana Aiyar: Are we not now allowed to get down at the Statue Junction?

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup: No, Sir. On 20-1-1120, while I was going over to Trivandrum, I wanted to get down at Pulimoodu as usual. The conductor told me that the Pulimood bus stop has been cancelled recently and that the passengers have to get down either at Cantonment or at the old District Court bus stop. At this stage, all that I want to bring to the attention of the Department is that the convenience of the public—I mean the travelling public—who do their journey under great stress and strain should be looked into. In one of the two places at least, there should be a bus stop and arrangements made accordingly.

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In the matter of overloading, Sir, my submission is that, the rule of public health is completely ignored. Just imagine the crowding of more than 70 or 80 passengers in a small van like the Transport Bus and the troubles undergone by them. Therefore, I would urge that the Department should take particular care to reduce the number of persons that may go in small vans like this. I am told that the Madras Government have limited the number of passengers that could travel in a Bus. A Bus, licensed to carry up to 24, is not allowed more than ten standing passengers; similarly, a Bus licensed to carry up to 19 passengers is allowed to carry only 8 standing passengers more, so also a Bus licensed to carry up to 16 passengers is not allowed to carry more than 6 standing passengers. I am of opinion that we also should copy that scheme. With these observations, I support the Demand.

Mr. K. A. Raman Pillai: Sir, I have not got any sledge hammer against the Transport Department. I am one of those who rejoice in the State having taken up the Transport, for, the interests of the State and the public are identical. Nationalisation of State Transport is a matter about which every one of us, every Travancorean, must be proud of. The co-ordination of road transport with canal and sea traffic is one of the items in the programme of the post-war reconstruction scheme and when it fructifies, many of our ills will be remedied. Sir, overcrowding and overloading are the standing complaint, rather a universal complaint, as regards the Transport. This complaint must have been dinned into your ears for the last several days. In respect of this matter, there are some difficulties. Firstly, the number of buses is limited. Unless the number is increased, there is no effective solution for the problem of overloading, and on account of war conditions, there is no possibility of increasing the number of buses. Now-a-days, travel is a necessity and it is not done as a sort of luxury. It is only for absolutely urgent purposes, that people are travelling. In the case of long trips, we must take into consideration the mentality of the person who wants to travel. Supposing a person is waiting at the Kazhakuttam junction. He has to go to Quilon to see some near relation of his. He might have got a telegram that that relation is seriously suffering. In such a situation, the man may be waiting for the bus. At last the bus comes; he gets in. But if he is not allowed to get into the bus, it means death to him. So, what I say is, in the case of long trips, until and unless the number of buses is increased, overcrowding will have to continue. The only thing which the Department has to pay attention to is that no untoward incident happens in the bus. The number of people

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[Mr. K. A. Raman Pillai]

who might have gathered at the bus stand and their life and death struggle for entering into the bus and their heavings and sighings, their physical agonies, all these are matters known to us rather too well known to need any mention now. Therefore, what I say is that until the number of buses are increased we will have to put up with the trouble.

Mr. G. Narayana Aiyar: Is the member aware of a recent notification published by the Madras Government about the decrease in the number of standing passengers from 24 to 22, from 20 to 18 and so on ?

Mr. K. A. Raman Pillai: That may be a fact. So much with regard to long trips. But my complaint is with regard to the overcrowding in town service, in Quilon and Trivandrum. In this city, no place is more than 4 or 5 miles distant from the East Fort. I do not see any reason for overloading as far as town service is concerned in the city of Trivandrum. Overloading certainly ought not to be the rule; it must be made an exception. During long trips, because of the non availability of buses, such a state of affairs may be allowed to continue. In other words, until better days come, overcrowding in the case of long trips will have to be allowed as a matter of necessity. As far as town service is concerned, there is absolutely no justification for overloading and overcrowding. I shall illustrate. There is a service for the Beach. Several people go in the evening hours to enjoy the salubrious breeze there. There is only one service and the last bus that leaves the Beach is at 8-30 P. M. an hour after the sunset according to the present Standard Time. The number of people who wait for the bus at 8-30 P. M. will be about 70 to 80. They will be gathering there, for what? For a fight. Boys and girls, women and children, all enter into the bus in a regular life and death struggle, pushing their way into the bus. Somehow or other they should get into the bus. Further, there will be two rows of standing people in between sitting passengers with children on all sides. That is the real position during the evening hours. It is indeed a very sorrowful spectacle. What I wish to point out is that, there is absolute necessity for issuing tickets according to the seating capacity in the bus. The others can very well walk. After all, the distance will be only about 4 or 5 miles from the beach to the destination. Accommodation must be given according to the seating capacity of the bus.

President: The trouble seems to be that everybody rushes in.

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Mr. K. A. Raman Pillai: Yes, Sir, all together in the twinkling of an eye.

Mr. N. Ramamurthi: May I know whether the Department is requesting people to rush in knowing that the bus will be over crowded? May I ask my honourable friend, whether people who go to the Beach travel for business or for pleasure?

Mr. K. A. Raman Pillai: I know that it is not at the instance of the Department the people are over crowding. I know full well that the Department is not responsible for that. But the Department can avoid that. What I wish to point out is that the Department must try their level best to see that such a thing does not take place. Tickets must be issued at least 10 minutes before the starting of the bus. If this is done, overloading or overcrowding could be avoided.

In the case of line buses from Trivandrum to Quilon and Kottayam, within the municipal limits of Trivandrum, there were four bus stops formerly namely at Palayam, Statue, Pulimood and the old District Court gate. Subsequently, that dwindled into three. Now, in only two places, the line buses stop. As Mr. Narayana Kurup pointed out, there is real hardship in the reduction of bus stops so far as the line buses are concerned. Pulimood and Statue junctions are very important centres, on account of the proximity to the public offices. Besides, from Pulimood there is a short cut to Vanchiyoor where Civil Courts, are located. There is this added importance to Pulimood junction. If passengers are obliged to get down at the Cantonment or the old District Court gate instead of at Pulimood or Statue, there is real hardship. This aspect of the matter requires remedy at the hands of the Department.

A word in the matter of issuing through tickets. Only in the Express buses, through tickets are issued for trips from Trivandrum to Kottayam. The ordinary buses do not follow such a procedure. There is regular fight in the matter of procuring tickets in the ordinary buses. At the start the passenger has to undergo an ordeal. After reaching Kottarakara, he has to undergo the same ordeal once again, so that, a man who wants to go from Trivandrum to Kottayam, in an ordinary Transport bus has to undergo ordeal at two places. That is a very hard state of affairs.

President: The House will now adjourn for the day and meet again on Monday at 12-o' clock.

The House adjourned at 5-30 P. M.

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